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BIOGRAPHY.

BIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM JENKYN, M. A. OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

His grandfather was a gentleman of a considerable estate at Folkstone in Kent. He sent his eldest son (the father of this Mr. Jenkyn) to Cambridge, designing him for some eminent church preferment. In consequence of being there cast under Mr. Perkins's ministry, he was brought to great seriousness, and embarked with the puritans. His father discovering this upon his return, and disliking that sort of people, was pleased to disinherit him of the main body of his estate. Finding his company disagreeable to his father, he removed to Mr. Richard Rogers's of Wethersfield, an old puritan minister, and there diligently prosecuted his studies. Being ordained, he was fixed as minister of Sudbury in Suffolk, where he was signally useful to many, by preaching and catechising; and he adorned all by a holy conversation. Here he married the granddaughter of Mr. John Rogers the proto-martyr in the Marian days, by whom he had this Mr. William Jenkyn, who was born at Sudbury, 1612. His father died when he was very young. The grandfather before mentioned, then living at Folkstone, seemed extremely softened upon his son's death, and sent for his grandson, promising to take care of his education. He lived with him much beloved till nine years old, when his mother, fearing his want of a religious education there, took him home, to the great displeasure of the old gentleman. She and her second husband were very careful to train him up in serious piety.

He made quick advances in school learning, and was sent to Cambridge at the age of fourteen, and placed under Mr. Anthony Burgess. He pursued his studies with great success, and his progress in piety was as eminent as in learning. His company was earnestly courted by some young wits of the university, for his sprightly genius; but perceiving their looseness, he waved an intimacy with them. He did not begin to preach for a considerable time after he had commenced M. A. Soon after he appeared in public he was chosen lecturer of St. Nicholas Acons, London; and from thence was called to Hithe, near Colchester in Essex, where he first married. The aguishness of that place, and the solicitation of his London friends, brought him back to the city, about the year 1641, when he was chosen minister of Christ Church, and some months after, lecturer of St. Ann's, Blackfriars. He continued to fill up this double station with great diligence and acceptance, till, upon the destruction of monarchy, he refused to observe the public thanksgivings appointed by the parliament. For this he was suspended from his ministry, and had his benefice of Christ Church sequestered. This induced him to retire to Billericay in Essex.

Upon his return to London, after six months, he was sent to the tower for what was called Love's plot. Upon a petition, (for which some have censured him) the parliament voted him a pardon, and an immediate discharge from prison and sequestration. Mr. Feak, the noted fifth monarchy man, having been put into Christ Church by the government, upon his sequestration, he forbore to eject him. But his parishioners, being earnest to enjoy his labours, set up a lecture for him on Lord's day mornings at seven o'clock, and raised a considerable subscription for him. In this, and his lecture at Blackfriars (out of which he had not been ejected) he continued till Dr. Gouge's death, when he was chosen pastor of that church. Mr. Feak afterwards becoming obnoxious to government, was removed, and the governors of St. Bartholomew's hospital presented Mr. Jenkyn to this living afresh. Here he exercised the ministry morning and afternoon to a crowded congregation, with eminent success, and particularly upon occasional hearers. He was very cautious of touching upon any thing that might give umbrage to the government, when he knew so many eyes were upon him; but wholly applied himself to *preach Christ, and him crucified.* In this course, he was some years upon the names given to Christ in

scripture, and preached over the epistle of Jude, which he afterwards printed. He was not satisfied to desist from the ministry upon the act of uniformity, though he could not comply with the terms of it, but still preached in private as he had opportunity. Upon the Oxford act, (not being able to take the oath) he retired to his own house at Langley in Hertfordshire, and preached there every Lord's day, where, through the good providence of God, he met but with little disturbance.

Upon the indulgence, in 1671, he returned to London, where he had a new meeting place erected in Jewin-street; and there he soon raised a numerous auditory. He was also chosen lecturer at Pinner's hall. After the indulgence was revoked, there was so far a connivance, that his services on Lord's days continued undisturbed, till that terrible storm broke out against the nonconformists in 1682. Then he continued to preach from place to place, where he could do it most secretly, and out of the reach of the vile informers. But at length, on September 2, 1684, being with Mr. Reynolds, Mr. John Flavel, and Mr. Keeling, spending the day in prayer with many of his friends, in a place where they thought themselves out of danger; the soldiers broke in upon them in the midst of the worship. All the ministers made their escape, except Mr. Jenkyn. [Mr. Flavel was so near, that he heard the insolence of the officers and soldiers to Mr. Jenkyn when they had taken him; and observes, in his diary, that he might have escaped as well as himself, had it not been for a piece of vanity in a lady, whose long train hindered his going down stairs, having out of his too great civility, let her pass before him.] Being carried before two aldermen, sir James Edwards and sir James Smith, they treated him very rudely, knowing that it would be acceptable at court. Upon his refusing the Oxford oath, they committed him to Newgate, rejecting his offer of 40*l.* fine, which the law empowered them to take, though it was urged that the air of Newgate would infallibly suffocate him. He presented a petition to the king for a release, which was backed by an assurance from his physicians, that his life was in danger from his close imprisonment. But no other answer could be obtained than this, "Jenkyn shall be a prisoner as long as he lives." [This was most rigorously adhered to, for he was not suffered even to go to baptize his daughter's child, though a considerable sum was offered for that liberty, with security for his return.] The keepers were ordered not to let him pray

with any visitants. Even when his daughter came to ask his blessing, he was not allowed to pray with her. Soon after his confinement, his health began to decline; but he continued all along in the utmost joy and comfort of soul. He said to one of his friends, "What a vast difference is there between this and my first imprisonment! Then I was full of doubts and fears, of grief and anguish; and well I might, for going out of God's way, and my own calling, to meddle with things that did not belong to me. But now, being found in the way of my duty, in my master's business, though I suffer even to bonds, yet I am comforted beyond measure. The Lord sheds abroad his love sensibly in my heart. I feel it, I have the assurance of it." Then turning to some who were weeping by him, he said, "why weep ye for me? CHRIST lives: he is my friend; a friend born for adversity; a friend that never dies. Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."

He died in Newgate, January 19, 1685, aged 72, having been a prisoner there four months; where, as he said a little before his death, a man might be as effectually murdered as at Tyburn. [A nobleman having heard of his happy release, said to the king, "may it please your majesty, Jenkyn has got his liberty." Upon which he asked with eagerness, "aye, who gave it him?" The nobleman replied, "a greater than your majesty, the King of kings;" with which the king seemed greatly struck, and remained silent.] Mr. Jenkyn was buried by his friends with great honour at Bunhill fields, where he has a tombstone (erected in 1715) with a Latin inscription, which expresses his having been imprisoned in Newgate, and died a martyr, in the 52d year of his ministry.

§ Mr. Baxter in his own life (part iii. p. 94.) speaking of Mr. Jenkyn, among other ministers in London whom he briefly characterizes, styles him, "that sententious, elegant, preacher." The following little anecdote may not be thought unworthy of being here recorded.

Mr. Jenkyn's daughter,* who was a highspirited, though a very worthy and pious woman, gave mourning rings at her father's funeral, on which she ordered this motto to be inscribed: "Mr. William Jenkyn, murdered in Newgate." This was communicated

* Turner, in his Hist. of Prov. relates this of Mr. Jenkyn's son, who suffered in the west, on Monmouth's account, ch. 143. p. 117, where a full account is given of his triumphant death.

by one who was acquainted with a person to whose father one of these rings was presented.

Mr. Jenkyn preached two farewel sermons, on the sabbath preceding Bartholomew day, of which, though he takes no particular notice of the occasion, a brief sketch may not be unacceptable. The morning sermon is on Hebrews xi. 38. *Of whom the world was not worthy.* "The apostle in this chapter, deservedly called by some a little book of martyrs, discovers the triumph of faith, which, assents to truths, however improbable; excites to duties however arduous; enables for sufferings however severe. All kinds of persecutions were laid upon these worthies, but they would never be brought to forsake God and his truth for any of them. They went through all by that faith which is the victory over the world. We have here the excellency of these sufferers in the apostle's estimation. When they were under all these distresses, they were such of whom the world was not worthy. OBS. *A godly man sees a very great worth and excellence in the people of God in the midst of all the trouble and persecution that can befal them.*" This is illustrated by showing, how this esteem is expressed, and what is the ground of it; particularly, their relation to God, and their having his image imprinted upon them. The discourse concludes with several just and useful inferences; among which are these three. "We see here the excellence of holiness above all wordly glory. There is a silent dignity in reproached piety, and there is a silent ignominy in advanced iniquity. As it was with Christ, on whom was a secret glory under all his ignominy, so it is with the servants of Christ. When they are in trouble and disgrace, the Spirit of God and of glory rests upon them. Note again, the happiness of those who see this excellence in holiness, though disgraced and undervalued. If there be any thing in the world that is a sign of sincerity it is this; to love holiness when disgraced, abused, and spit upon. Here is comfort in infirmities and afflictions. If you regard his [people] in their sufferings, the Lord will regard you in yours. This will be comfort in the last day. If thou hast owned Christ when he was in rags, do not fear but he will own thee when he comes in his robes. Lastly, the people of God should not be discouraged under any affliction that can befal them in this world. God himself highly esteems you [as also do his people] and the love of one saint makes amends for all the hatred of sinners. But even the wicked themselves have a good opinion of you

when you do not basely comply: their consciences cannot but [applaud] you, when their tongues speak against you. But your own consciences are more than a thousand witnesses for you. No man is miserable for any thing in the world that is done to him, or said of him. No, it is a good conscience that will give the best acquittance. But that man who hath the godly stand at a distance from him, hath much need to be afraid of himself."

The afternoon sermon is on Exod. iii. 2—5. concerning *the bush which burned but was not consumed;* which he considers as an emblem of the church in a time of affliction, which instead of destroying, purifies it. But the greater part of the discourse is on the last clause of the text; *the place whereon thou standest is holy ground;* from whence he investigates the supposed holiness of places under the gospel, and shows that no human ceremony can give any degree of sanctity to one place above another, but that it is the peculiar presence of a holy God that makes any place holy, which cannot be justly considered as any longer so, when his spiritual presence is withdrawn. Having exposed the folly of giving any degree of sanctity to wood and stone, he concludes with strongly recommending the cultivation of personal holiness, and a due concern to sanctify God's holy day and ordinances, and commandments. "It is not enough for you," says he, "to have a choice sentence of God's word written upon the walls of your churches; but let God's law be written in your hearts and consciences, and practised in your lives, that all the world may see you live as men dedicated to the true God." Having cautioned them against disobeying the truth they had heard, or putting a wrong construction upon any thing now delivered, he closes with these words: "But I have better hopes of you my beloved hearers; and I trust that the Lord will be better unto your souls than his ministers, than his word, or any thing else can be. God bless you and his ordinances, and discover his mind at this time to you." q. d. May he guide you in the path of duty, in the present season of trial, when your ministers are driven from you. This discourse was evidently calculated to remove their prejudices in favour of consecrated places, and prepare them to hear the gospel in any place where they could enjoy that liberty, though he does not directly apply the subject to that purpose.

RELIGIOUS AND MORAL ESSAYS.

And he hath on his vesture, and on his thigh a name written; King of kings, and Lord of lords. Revelation xix. 16.

THUS Christ is here described, as a general at the head of the armies of heaven, about to engage his enemies; whom he is presently afterwards said to subdue. It appears to have been an ancient custom among several nations to adorn the images of their deities, princes, victors at their public games, and other eminent persons, with inscriptions upon them, expressing either the characters of the persons, their names, or some other circumstance, which might contribute to their honour. And to that custom the description here given of Christ may possibly have some allusion. There are several such images yet extant, with an inscription written either on the garment, or one of the thighs; which seems to favour the opinion of those interpreters, who apprehend, that St. John here uses the figure *hendiades;* and that the meaning of the words, *on his vesture, and on his thigh*, may be, *on that part of his vesture, which lay on his thigh.* And as those inscriptions are placed on the upper garment, Grotius seems very justly to explain the words, ἐπὶ τὸ ἱμάτιον, by *super paludamentum suum imperatorium, ut potentia ejus in ista victoria manifeste ab omnibus conspici queat.* The use of this figure is not uncommon with ancient writers, and we meet with several instances of it in the new testament. Thus it is said, *that the priest of Jupiter brought oxen and garlands unto the gates*, that is, *oxen adorned with garlands.* And St. Paul says of himself: *For the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question*, meaning, *for the hope of the resurrection.* But as a further confirmation of this sense of the passage in the Revelation, it may not be improper here to describe briefly several remarkable figures of that sort, which are yet extant.

Herodotus mentions two figures of *Sesostris*, king of Egypt, cut upon rocks in Ionia, after his conquest of that country, with the following inscription across their breast, extending from one shoulder to the other: Ἐγὼ τήνδε τὴν χώρην ὤμοισι τοῖσι ἐμοῖσι ἐκτησάμην. Gruter has published a naked statue, made of marble, and supposed to represent the *genius* either of some Roman emperor, or of Antinous, who was deified by Hadrian, with an inscription on the inside of the right thigh, which is written perpendicularly in Ro-

man letters, and contains the names of three persons. And near the statue, on the same side of it, stands an oval shield, with the names of two other persons, written round the rim, in letters of the like form. But as there is nothing further remarkable in these inscriptions, it is not necessary to transcribe them. In the appendix to Dempster's *Etruria Regalis*, is a female image of brass, clothed in a loose tunic down to the feet, with a shorter garment over it, on the right side of which is a perpendicular inscription in Etrurian characters, extending partly on the lower garment. This figure, from the diadem on the head, and other circumstances that accompany it, Philip Bonarota, the editor of that work, supposes to have been designed for some *Etrurian deity*. The inscription upon this image, and some following ones written in the like character, are here omitted, as no one hitherto has attempted to explain them. Montfaucon has given us a male image of the same metal, dressed in a tunic, and over that another vestment somewhat like a Roman *toga*, reaching to the middle of the legs, on the bottom of which is an Etrurian inscription written horizontally. But that figure has a different attitude in Dempster. The like may be said of another *female statue* of marble, clothed in a long tunic, and over that a *palla;* which falling from the shoulders on the side of each arm, forms a *sinus* below the breast, where it has on its edge an Etrurian inscription, which runs in a curve line across the body; as it is represented in Montfaucon. But in Dempster the inscription appears on that part of the *palla*, which covers the right arm, and is more legible than the former. There are likewise in both those writers two male figures crowned with laurel, which Montfaucon calls *combatants*, as the laurel was an emblem of victory. But Bonarota takes one of them for an image of *Apollo*, which has a chain round the neck, a garment wrapped over the right arm, and a bracelet on the left, with half boots on the legs; and the rest of the body being naked, has an Etrurian inscription written downwards in two lines, on the inside of the left thigh. The other figure has the lower part of the body clothed in a loose vestment, with an inscription upon it, over the right thigh, perpendicularly written in Roman letters; which Bonarota has thus expressed in a more distinct manner, than they appear in Montfaucon: POMPONIO VIRIO I. To these may be added from Montfaucon a marble statue of a naked *combatant*, with a fillet about his head in token of victory. It is drawn in two views, one

exhibiting the back, and the other the fore part of the body; the latter of which has in Greek letters the name ΚΑΦΙΣΟΔΟΡΟΣ for ΚΑΦΙΣΟΔΩΡΟΣ, perpendicularly inscribed on the outside of the left thigh; and the former the name ΑΙΣΧΛΑΜΙΟΥ, in the like characters and situation, on the right thigh; which together make one inscription, signifying *Caphisodorus* filius *Æschlamii*. It may suffice to mention only one figure more of this sort, which occurs both in Montfaucon and Dempster; and that is a brass image of a *boy* sitting, with a *bulla* hanging at his breast, a bracelet upon each arm and leg, a bird in his right hand, and an inscription in Etrurian characters, beginning at the upper part of his right thigh on the inside, and descending to the middle of his leg. This is supposed by Dempster to be one of those images, which were consecrated to the *lares*, when boys arrived at the age of puberty.

By the account here given of these figures it appears, that the inscriptions upon such of them, as have been transcribed, were designed for the honour of the persons, to whom they relate, according to their different characters. And it seems but reasonable to suppose the like, with regard to the rest. That of *Sesostris* was plainly intended to represent the extent of his conquests, and those of the *combatants* to preserve the memory of their victories in those public exercises. As St. John therefore in several passages of his *Revelation* evidently alludes to other national customs, in order to illustrate the sublime and divine subjects, upon which he there treats; why may he not be thought to have done the like in this also. With regard to the number and situation of the inscriptions, we find but one upon each of the figures above described, and that either upon the garment, or the naked thigh: except only the two figures of *Sesostris;* as to which the historian has not informed us, whether they were naked or clothed. Montfaucon in his explication of the two *combatants*, one naked, and the other clothed, as described above, has the following remark: *Si sacra profanis admiscere liceat, hæc aliquatenus referri possunt ad hunc Apocalypsis locum*, 19. 16. *ubi de Domino N. J. Christo victore dicitur:* Et habet in vestimento et in femore suo scriptum, Rex regum et Dominus dominantium. *Hæc itaque in femore scriptura signum erat honoris et victoriæ.* By which last words he seems to distinguish the writing on the thigh from that on the garment, as if St. John had meant two different inscriptions. And the like may be said of Grotius, who after he has explained the words ἐπὶ τὸ

ἱμάτιον in the manner before recited, interprets ἐπὶ τὸν μηρὸν, which follow, by *in capulo ensis, qui pendebat ad femur*, plainly taking this for a different inscription from the former. But why may we not understand this passage in the figurative sense, and conclude that one inscription only was intended by it, answerable to what has been shown in relation to the several figures already described? Agreeably to which interpretation, as St. John had just before represented Christ as sitting upon a white horse, and in this passage as arrayed in the habit of a general; the inscription may be conceived as placed horizontally on the lower part of his *paludamentum*, or *cloak*, like that on the *toga* of a male figure mentioned above: for as the general's cloak was but a short garment, that part of it, which contained the inscription, would naturally rest upon his thigh, when on horseback. But to suppose another inscription exactly of the same form written upon the naked thigh, seems neither so agreeable to ancient custom, nor suitable to the supreme dignity of the person there described.

OBSERVATIONS ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG MAN, ON HIS ENTRANCE UPON THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY, BY DR. FULLER.

"*He was a good man.*" Acts ii. 24.

It were easy to prove the necessity of a person being a good man, in order to his properly engaging in the work of the ministry; Christ would not commit his sheep but to one that loved him; but on this remark I shall not enlarge. I have no reason to doubt, my brother, but that God has given you an understanding to know him that is true, and a heart to love him in sincerity; I trust, therefore, such an attempt on this occasion is needless. Nor does it appear to me to be the meaning of the evangelist. It is not barely meant of Barnabas that he was a *regenerate* man, (though that is implied,) but it denotes that he was *eminently* good. We use the word so in common conversation. If we would describe one that more than ordinarily shines in piety, meekness, and kindness, we know not how to speak of him better than to say, with a degree of emphasis, "he is a *good* man." After this eminency in goodness, brother, may it be your concern and mine daily to aspire!

Perhaps, indeed, we may have sometimes heard this epithet used with a sneer. Persons who take pleasure in treating others

with contempt, will frequently, with a kind of proud pity, speak in this manner, "ay, such a one is a *good* man;" leaving it implied, that goodness is but an indifferent qualification, unless it be accompanied with greatness. But these things ought not to be. The apostle Paul did not value himself upon those things wherein he differed from other christians; but upon that which he possessed in common with them, *charity*, or *christian love*. *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.*

My dear brother, VALUE THE CHARACTER OF A GOOD MAN IN ALL THE PARTS OF YOUR EMPLOYMENT; AND ABOVE ALL THOSE THINGS WHICH THE WORLD COUNTS GREAT AND ESTIMABLE. More particularly,

Value it *at home in your family*. If you walk not closely with God there, you will be ill able to work for him elsewhere. You are lately become the head of a family. Whatever charge it shall please God in the course of your life to place under your care, I trust it will be your concern to recommend Christ and the gospel to them, walk circumspectly before them, constantly worship God with them, offer up secret prayer for them, and exercise a proper authority over them. There is a sort of religious gossiping, which some ministers have indulged to their hurt; loitering about perpetually at the houses of their friends, and taking no delight in their own. Such conduct in a minister and master of a family must of necessity root out all family order, and, to a great degree, family worship; and, instead of endearing him to his friends, it only exposes him to their just censure. Perhaps they know not how to be so plain as to tell him of it at their own houses, but they will think the more, and speak of it, it is likely, to one another when he is gone. I trust, my brother, that none of your domestic connexions will have to say when you are gone, "he was loose and careless in his conduct, or sour and churlish in his temper;" but rather, "he was *a good man*."

Value this character in your *private retirements*. Give yourself up to *the word of God, and to prayer*. The apostle charged Timothy, saying, *Meditate on these things, give thyself wholly to them*, or *be thou* IN *them;* but this will never be without a considerable

share of the *good man.* Your heart can never be *in* those things which are foreign to its prevailing temper; and if your heart is not in your work, it will be a poor lifeless business indeed. We need not fear exhausting the bible, or dread a scarcity of divine subjects. If our hearts are but kept in unison with the spirit in which the bible was written, every thing we meet with will be interesting. The more we read, the more interesting it will appear; and the more we know, the more we shall perceive there is to be known. Beware also, brother, of neglecting secret *prayer.* The fire of devotion will go out, if it be not kept alive by an habitual dealing with Christ. Conversing with men and things may brighten our gifts and parts; but it is conversing with God that must brighten our graces. Whatever ardor we may feel in our public work, if this is wanting, things cannot be right, nor can they in such a train come to a good issue.

Value it in your *public exercises.* It is hard going on in the work of the ministry without a good degree of spirituality; and yet, considering the present state of human nature, we are in the greatest danger of the contrary. Allow me, brother, to mention two things in particular, each of which are directly opposite to that spirit which I am attempting to recommend. *One* is an *assumed earnestness*, or *forced zeal* in the pulpit, which many weak hearers may mistake for the enjoyment of God. But though we may put on violent emotions; may smite with the hand, and stamp with the foot; if we are destitute of a genuine feeling sense of what we deliver, it will be discerned by judicious hearers, as well as by the Searcher of hearts, and will not fail to create disgust. If, on the contrary, we feel and realize the sentiments we deliver, emotions and actions will be the natural expressions of the heart; and this will give weight to the doctrines, exhortations, or reproofs which we inculcate; what we say will come with a kind of divine authority to the consciences, if not to the hearts of the hearers. The *other* is, a being under the influence of *low and selfish motives* in the exercise of our work. This is a temptation against which we have special reason to watch and pray. It is right, my brother, for you to be diligent in your public work; to be instant in season and out of season; to preach the gospel not only where you dwell, but in the surrounding villages, wherever a door is opened for you: but while you are thus engaged, let it not be from motives of policy, merely to increase your auditory; but from love to Christ and the

souls of your fellow sinners. It is this only that will endure reflection in a dying hour. The apostle Paul was charged by some of the Corinthian teachers with being *crafty*, and with having *caught* the Corinthians *with guile:* but he could say in reply to all such insinuations, in behalf of himself and his fellow labourers, *our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.*

Value it in the *general tenor of your behaviour*. Cultivate a meek, modest, peaceful, and friendly temper. Be generous and humane. Prove by your spirit and conduct that you are a lover of all mankind. To men in general, but especially to the poor and the afflicted, *be pitiful, be courteous.* It is this, my brother, that will recommend the gospel you proclaim. Without this, could you preach with the eloquence of an angel, you may expect that no good end will be answered.

Prize the character of the *good man, above worldly greatness.* It is not sinful for a minister to possess property any more than another man; but to aspire after it is unworthy of his sacred character. Greatness, unaccompanied with goodness, is valued as nothing by the great God. Kings and emperors, where that is wanting, are but great *beasts, horned beasts*, pushing one at another. When Sennacherib vaunted against the church of God, that he would *enter the forest of her Carmel, and cut down her tall cedars*, the daughter of Zion is commanded to *despise* him. God speaks of him as we should speak of a buffalo, or even of an ass, *I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest*. Outward greatness, when accompanied with goodness, may be a great blessing; yet even then, it is the latter, and not the former, that denominates the true worth of a character.

Value it above *mental greatness*, or greatness in gifts and parts. It is not wrong to cultivate gifts; on the contrary, it is our duty so to do. But desirable as these are, they are not to be compared with goodness. *Covet earnestly the best gifts*, says the apostle, AND YET SHOW I UNTO YOU A MORE EXCELLENT WAY, viz. *charity*, or *love*. If we improve in gifts and not in grace, to say the least, it will be useless, and perhaps dangerous, both to ourselves and others. To improve in gifts, that we may be the better able to discharge our work, is laudable; but if it be for the sake of popular applause, let

us expect a blast. Hundreds of ministers have been ruined by indulging a thirst for the character of *the great man*, while they have neglected the far superior character of *the good man*.

[From the Christian's Magazine.]

A REMARKABLE EXPERIENCE.

Rev. Sir,

AT the repeated request and entreaty of two or three valuable friends, I am prevailed upon to write my experience; or, in other words, to acknowledge what the Lord has done for my soul. If you think it worth a place in your *Repository*, if convenient, I have no objection to its appearing in the first number.

I confess I set about it with reluctance, yet when I consider the infinite mercy and goodness of God to me, I blush at my own diffidence. But as I am encouraged to hope that what I have experienced may be of use, I desire to be enabled to overcome my objections, and to lay aside every consideration, but that of giving God the glory of my salvation, and of being of benefit to believers, who labour under desertion, despondency, and deep distress of soul, similar to what I have endured.

I am under a necessity of beginning my narrative at an early period, as one occurrence is connected with another. At about three years of age I was taken by my parents to visit some relatives in the country, where I was to stay a few weeks; my mother was in a bad state of health, which terminated in her death, and I continued with them seven years; my uncle and aunt, with whom I resided, had no child, and they indulged me to a fault: my aunt was a pleasing woman, but too irresolute to manage a child properly; my uncle, from every part of his conduct which I recollect, was one that feared God, and was naturally of a humane tender disposition; his behaviour was so judicious, that I respected him, and at the same time felt no restraint in his company. I frequently read the bible to him; and when any passage struck me, I asked him the meaning. One day I was reading the 6th chapter to the Hebrews, where it is expressed, that there were persons that crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh. Uncle, said I, how can they crucify our Saviour again? He made a pause, and then replied, if you tell untruths, if you take God's name in vain, or are undutiful to your parents, or to those who have the care of you, that is crucifying our Lord afresh.

It was not long after this I committed some fault, which my aunt reproved me for. I was exceedingly impertinent to her: at which she was greatly affected, and shed tears: this cut me to the heart; yet my abominable pride was such, I could not ask pardon, although I was more wretched than I am able to describe, both from my natural feelings, and the sense I had of the sin I had committed. Then came to my mind the crucifying our Lord afresh; and my convictions were so strong, that I thought there was but a step between me and hell. I wished from my inmost soul, that I had never been born. How long these convictions lasted, or how they wore off, I cannot remember.

At the age of ten years my friends sent for me to London; from this time till twenty I experienced many convictions; often determining to become religious; and sensibly feeling, that if I were to die, I was lost; however, these impressions, like the former, soon wore off.

From this time, till I arrived at the age of twenty-one, nothing material occurred, when I married, which was a time that I had fixed in my own mind for having done with vanity and becoming serious; but alas! I was just the same; and to outward appearance worse; for when I was single, I went to church regularly twice on Sunday, but now I went to no place of worship: I either loitered my time away, or spent it in vanity. I cannot say that I went on in this way without checks of conscience, for it was almost constantly in my mind that I was living without God in the world. I wished to talk with my husband upon the subject; but it was but seldom that I had courage to speak about religion, and when I did, we always clashed in our opinion, for he was an antinomian, and my ideas were altogether legal. If I talked of going to church, he would say he would rather go to a play, for that our minister knew nothing about religion. I could not agree with him, and I was thoroughly dissatisfied with our way of living; it was a burden to me; I had a desire after religion, but had not courage to be singular; I wished my husband to be serious; he seemed to be the bar; but this hindrance was soon removed.

When we had been married something more than four years my husband died; and the day following my child; a boy three years old; so that in a few days was I deprived of all outward comforts, and every earthly tie. As I was left without excuse, so I did indeed sit loose to the world; every thing on earth appeared tran-

sitory and uncertain; and I felt the force of a line or two of Dr. Young's, where he says, "all, all on earth is shadow, all beyond is substance."

I began now to read the bible, with a sincere desire to know what I must do to be saved. But how shall I express the goodness of the Lord to me? He chose me in the furnace of affliction, and drew me with the cords of love. The scriptures were made so sweet and comfortable to me, that I read them day and night; they were all my delight, and all my consolation. While I was reading the bible, I forgot my trouble, and in some measure anticipated future happiness. The Lord was so gracious to me, that my eyes were open to see that grace was free, all was to be had without money, &c. and that none that came to him should in any wise be cast out. I may truly say, that I was taught of God, for I had no serious person to speak to, and sat under legal preaching; it was twelve months before I heard a gospel sermon; when I was providentially asked by an acquaintance to go to Jewin-street meeting; Mr. Woodgate preached from the sixty-third of Isaiah, first verse. I never heard so sweet a sermon before: every thing he said about the Saviour agreed exactly with what the Lord had taught me: every sentiment that he delivered was my own. As I came out of the meeting I expressed my satisfaction, and said I should be glad to go there again, which I accordingly did, and I do not know that I ever went to my old church any more, for I had a seat taken for me at the meeting, and I continued to go there for near three years. I sometimes went to the Tabernacle, and other places of worship where the gospel was preached; in short, I took every opportunity of hearing; for I found the oftener I attended the means, and the closer I kept to God in prayer, the more peace, comfort and communion I had with him. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. No one can tell what the presence of the Lord imports, but those who have enjoyed it.

From what I have said, perhaps it may be supposed that I had sunshine all the way; but the sequel will prove the contrary: indeed, thus far the road was tolerably smooth, yet I was not without my conflicts: the old and the new nature struggled, and I often groaned, being burthened; sometimes I found sin a load intolerable, but still the promises of God were brought to my mind, and applied with power: and I experienced great nearness to God. One evening, when in prayer, I was so carried out of myself, that whether

in the body or out of the body I could hardly tell; when I came to myself, I was astonished. At another time, when I awoke in the morning, it was rather early, and in the summer, the Lord manifested himself to me in such a manner, and gave me such a foretaste of heaven, that the joy and happiness I felt was so great I could hardly sustain it. It was really an exceeding weight of bliss. It is now about twelve years since I was favoured in this manner, but it is quite fresh upon my memory, and I trust it will never be erased: from this time I enjoyed great consolations for near four years.

Some little time after this I had the following remarkable dream. I thought I was alone in a very wide handsome street; the pavement was exceeding good, the pathway broad, and the sun shone delightfully pleasant; but of a sudden the sun drew in, and by degrees it clouded over, till at last it was quite dark. I thought at first that it was an eclipse, and expected it would be light again; but I was disappointed in my expectation; for instead of growing light, it grew darker and darker, till it appeared to be night. I knew not what to make of it, for I had an idea that it was morning. I was rather frightened, and hurried on, but went a very little way before my head turned giddy, and I fell with great force against some bulk, which gave me violent pain. Several persons came to my assistance; some had lanthorns, some had candles, and others had torches; by the light of these I examined myself to see whether I was hurt, but could not see that I was in the least; I also expected that these people would light me home, but in a few minutes the light all disappeared, and I was instantaneously out of the street before mentioned, into a high road, and was in the greatest terror of mind; for I was alone, and did not know what might happen to me: while I was reflecting on my unhappy situation, it grew still darker, till the darkness was so weighty it crushed me to the ground. I cannot describe the sensations that I then felt, but I was as miserable as can be conceived: I thought to myself, this is like the Egyptian darkness; a darkness that may be felt; I tried to step with my feet and to feel with my hands, but could not stir hand nor foot. I stood sighing and groaning under this weight, my mind being in the deepest distress and embarrassment. I continued there so long that I thought I should never see light again; but after having given up all hopes, I felt the darkness not quite so heavy, and it gradually grew lighter, till the weight was removed.

Soon after this I experienced an unaccountable change. I thought there was light, and I felt the sun shine upon me, and could even see the sun through my eyelids, yet my eyes were fast closed, I could not open them. While I was meditating on the strangeness of my condition, of a sudden a clear light burst upon me, and I saw every thing plainly. I then surveyed the road, which was the most rugged that I ever saw. There was no footway; it was something like a country lane, only broader, after heavy showers, and the ruts were beat up in great clods, which when a frost succeeds become very hard and shaggy, so that it was almost impossible to walk without falling. I saw at a distance some poor people creeping on very slowly. Then I turned to my right hand, but, how shall I speak my surprise! I was scarce a hand's breadth from a deep ditch! it was so deep that I could see no bottom. At the side of the ditch there was part of a rotten rail; it appeared so very rotten, that if any one attempted to lean upon it they would inevitably fall in. At the part where I stood it was entirely broken down. I walked slowly till I got out of sight of the ditch; after that I went from one street to another, and then awoke, and was glad to find it was a dream! But my joy upon the occasion was soon done away; for in the morning I was so deeply affected, that I sat for some hours in a pensive melancholy frame, but could not from its obvious incoherency get any satisfactory interpretation of it.

From this time my consolations began sensibly to decline, and by degrees I felt myself sinking into a state of despondency. I was alarmed, and endeavoured to find out the cause. I examined myself by the word of God, and was convinced that it was sin which had separated me from God, and iniquity hid his face from me. The closer I examined myself the more unhappy I was; I even lothed, hated, and abhorred myself. Now the commandment came, the law did its office, and a very severe schoolmaster I found it. Sin became exceeding sinful, it appeared in its true colours, black as its author. Yet still I continued to attend ordinances, but found no freedom in prayer. At last God seemed to have quite forsaken me, and I began to conclude that his mercy was clean gone for ever. All I read and heard gave me no comfort; so far from it that it condemned me. I heard Mr. Woodgate preach at length from these words. *And will gather the wheat into his garner;* but the *chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.* I was all attention; and from what was said I drew this inference, that I certainly was the chaff. I got

out of the meeting as fast as I could, for I was so drowned with tears I was ashamed any one should see my face. I hurried home as fast as I could. Now indeed I suffered the terrors of the Lord, and was really distracted: like Job, I looked this way and that way, to find the Lord, but all in vain; and like him I seemed to be left in the power of Satan, to do what he would with me, only to spare my life: I was so harassed, tempted, and embarrassed in mind, that I believe I did not close my eyes to sleep for near a week; and when nature was quite exhausted, my rest was so unsound it did me but little good; what I suffered during one whole year is not in language to describe; I searched every page in the bible, to find a glimpse of hope, but my eyes were holden, I could not see one ray; every condemning passage of scripture was applied to me: I threw away the bible, and thought I would read it no more. I was like the troubled sea, I could have no rest. Then I read the bible again, threw it away, and read it over again.

In reading the 54th of Isaiah, the 11th verse afforded me a little comfort, which was the only support I had for the time which I have before mentioned, and Satan wanted to rob me of this. He persuaded me that I endeavoured to pervert the scriptures, for that I had no right to any promise. Then I read the 107th psalm over and over again a number of times, and endeavoured to take comfort, but Satan beat me off, and persuaded me that I was not a child of God, and that he had me as safe as if I were in hell already; for that I was twice dead, plucked up by the roots; and that with respect to me there remained *no more sacrifice for sin.*

What I felt is easier to be conceived than expressed. I thought there was not any person like myself; for the distress and perplexity of my mind was such, that I could do no kind of business; and I thought, if my father should die, my relations would put me in a madhouse, for I was company for nobody; and as I was certain I must go to hell, I was determined to put an end to my existence. With this intention I went to three or four apothecaries' shops, and procured from each a separate portion of opium; on my return home I made them into three pills, (each of which I am informed was sufficient to kill any one person); and here, how shall I describe the anguish of my soul, when, in the bitterness of my spirit, I swallowed two of the pills, fastening the other above my pillow, determining, in case the two were ineffectual, to swallow the third. But, oh! the goodness and mercy of my God, whose

love is unspeakable! he saved me out of the hands of my enemy, by preventing the poison taking the effect I expected. After a few minutes it threw my body into violent agitations, during which I brought a great quantity of clear water off my stomach. I never closed my eyes, but was as one intoxicated, and pale as death; and it rendered my body so very weak, I was unable to walk.

However, in a short time I recovered, but kept the cause of my disorder an entire secret from every person: but my distress and despondency of soul continuing, I was still determined not to live; and thought I would try if I could drown myself; and with that intention I set out one evening at nine o'clock, and sauntered about *Islington* till eleven, and then I went to the New River side. The watchman was crying the hour. When I saw him safe in his box, I began to summon up all my resolution, for I was rather a coward; then I imagined I heard rats in the water, and thought they would begin upon me as soon as I threw myself in. While I was musing about the rats, and trying to get courage, a young man came from the road, and was with me before I was aware of him. He said he had been watching me a long while, and was certain I was going to destroy myself. He asked me what was my trouble, and whether I wanted money, for that he had some by him. I told him my wants were not of that kind. He then talked seriously to me of the consequence of selfmurder, but I stopt him by saying that I knew as much as he could tell me. He offered to see me home, but I begged he would not, and told him I would go home. After he left me I returned home, thinking to take another opportunity; but this I believe was Satan's last effort; for after that night, my mind became more composed, and I never was tempted again in the same manner.

I thought I would read the bible again, and see if I could find any thing suitable to my case; and I read it many times to no purpose; however I did not give it up. As I was reading in the eleventh chapter of St. John, at the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth verses, our Lord, speaking to Martha, says, *I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.* I did not attempt to read any more of the chapter, but kept meditating on these verses. I thought this could not be said to those who were literally dead; and then the word *whosoever* was so encouraging, I found it like a reviving cordial, and as an anchor to my soul. I

would not have parted from these verses for all the world. I thought I would venture the next sabbath day to go to a little chapel in Baker's Court, Holborn, where I should not be known, lest I should not be able to stay the service out. Oh, I thought, if I should have one sentence applied with power I should be satisfied. I have often thought, I was like the woman who said, *if I may but touch the hem of his garment, I shall be whole.* Agreeable to my intention I went to the chapel on the Lord's day morning, but did not hear a word that was of service to me; as I was coming home I found myself unusually quiet and serene, and I thought, notwithstanding I was insensible under the word, I would go again in the afternoon. I did so; and a person was prayed for in despondency, and her case was described as if it had been my own. The sermon probably was preached for her; the text was in the 13th chapter of *Zechariah* and last verse, *And I will bring the third part through the fire, &c.*

The person who preached was not the stated minister, but a stranger. He was an able preacher, and said every thing that could be said from the text. He showed the process of refining silver, and of trying gold, and illustrated the whole verse most delightfully. From that hour I was set at full liberty; I was like *Christian* in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, when the burthen fell from his back; and knew by sweet experience that Jesus had suffered for *me;* I knew him for *myself*, as *my* Saviour and *my* God; and sweetly felt what is indicated in the 126th psalm, and read with peculiar pleasure the 107th; and could with real heartfelt gratitude say, as is expressed in the two first verses, *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy.*.

It is eleven years since I had this deliverance, and I desire to bless and praise the Lord, that to this day I have been kept by his mighty power; and at this moment have no doubt of his everlasting and unchangeable love to my soul.

MISCELLANY, ORIGINAL AND SELECTED.

A translation of the sacred scriptures from the Septuagint has just been published by Mr. Thompson. This may be supposed to have been made from the Hebrew original; and of course the differences, which may be discovered between it and the common translation, may excite the surprise of those who do not know that the Septuagint is not the original Hebrew, but a Greek translation. To relieve their minds we publish, from Saurin, vol. 3. p. 145, the following account of this celebrated translation.

By the *Septuagint*, or *the version of the seventy*, we mean a Greek translation of the Old Testament, made about three hundred years before the birth of Jesus Christ; and it derived its name from a common report, that seventy or seventy-two interpreters were the authors of it. One history, (or shall I rather call it one romance?) attributed to an officer of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, says, that this prince intending to collect a library at Alexandria, employed a learned Athenian, named Demetrius Phalareus, to execute his design. That he informed the king that the Jews were in possession of a book containing the laws of their legislator; that Ptolemy deputed three officers of his court to wait on the highpriest at Jerusalem, to require of him a copy of the book, and men capable of translating it into Greek; that in order to conciliate the Jews, and obtain this favour, he released an hundred thousand slaves, who had been held captives in his kingdom, and amply furnished them with all necessaries for their return to Judea; that he loaded his deputies with rich presents for the temple; that the highpriest not only gave them a copy of the law; but also sent six men of each tribe to translate it; that Ptolemy received them with marks of great distinction, and lodged them in the isle of Pharos, where they might pursue their work without interruption; and that they finished their work in as many days as there were authors labouring at it, that is to say, in seventy-two.

This narration being favourably received among the Jews, it happened, that the superstition of the populace, fomented by their own ignorance, and by the rash decisions of the rabbis, which were put in the place of solid proofs, added divers circumstances to render the tale more marvellous. Of this kind is the account given by Philo, who says, that each of the seventy translators pursued

his work separately from the rest; and that, when the translations of all came to be compared, there was not the least difference either in the meaning or in the expressions. Of the same sort is another circumstance related by *Justin Martyr*. Each translator, says he, was confined in a little cell, in order to prevent his holding any conversation with the rest of the interpreters, and this good father pretends to have seen the ruins of these cells in the isle of Pharos. We will not increase the list of these fabulous tales here, let it suffice to observe, that learned men have long agreed to reject these fables, and have fully shown the paradoxes, the anachronisms, and the contradictions, with which they are replete. We proceed now to relate what they have almost unanimously admitted.

That about three hundred years before the advent of Jesus Christ, a Greek translation of the Old Testament was made at Alexandria, for the use of the descendents of that multitude of Jews, which Alexander the Great had settled there, when he built that famous city in Egypt, to which he gave his own name; that a version was absolutely necessary for those people, because the far greater part of them had lost their native language; that at first the five books of Moses were only translated, because they were the only books which were then read in the synagogues; that after the tyrannies of Antiochus Epiphanes, the reading of the prophecies being then introduced, the prophecies also were translated; that this version was spread through all those parts of the world where the Greek language was used, or where Jews dwelt; and, that the apostles, preaching the gospel in the greatest part of the known world, and the Greek tongue being then every where the favourite of all who valued themselves on learning and politeness, made use of the version, commonly called the version of the Seventy, to convince the pagans, that the different parts of the economy of the Messiah had been foretold by the prophets, and that this version was one of the preparations which providence had employed for the call of the gentiles.

Rejoice evermore. 1 Thess. v. 16.

Rejoice evermore! O good apostle, how acceptable rules dost thou prescribe? O blessed God, how gracious laws dost thou impose? This is a rule to which one would think all men should be forward to conform: this is a law, which it may seem strange that any man should find in his heart to disobey: for what can any soul

desire more, than to be always on the merry pin, or to lead a life in continual alacrity? Who readily would not embrace a duty, the observance whereof is not only pleasant, but pleasure itself? Who is so wild as to affect a sin, which hath nothing in it but disease and disgust?

That joy should be enjoined, that sadness should be prohibited, may it not be a plausible exception against such a precept, that it is superfluous and needless, seeing all the endeavours of men do aim at nothing else, but to procure joy, and eschew sorrow; seeing all men do conspire in opinion with *Solomon*, that *a man hath nothing better under the sun, than to be merry?* Were it not rather expedient to recommend sober sadness, or to repress the inclinations of men to effuse mirth and jollity?

So it may seem; but yet alas, if we consult experience, or observe the world, we shall find this precept very ill obeyed: for do we not commonly see people in heavy dumps? do we not often hear doleful complaints? Is not this world apparently a stage of continual trouble and grief? Did not the preacher, upon a diligent survey of *all the works done under the sun*, truly proclaim, *behold all is vanity and vexation of spirit?* Where, I pray, is any full or firm content; where is solid and durable joy to be found?

It is true, that men, after a confused manner, are very eager in the quest, and earnest in the pursuit of joy; they rove through all the forest of creatures, and beat every bush of nature for it, hoping to catch it either in natural endowments and improvements of soul, or in the gifts of fortune, or in the acquists of industry; in temporal possessions, in sensual employments, in ludicrous divertisements and amusements of fancy; in gratification of their appetites and passions: they all hunt for it, though following a different scent, and running in various tracks, some in the way of plodding for rare notions, some in compassing ambitious projects, some in amassing heaps of wealth, some in practice of overreaching subtilties, some in wreaking their malice, their revenge, their envy; some in venting frothy conceits, bitter scoffs, or profane railleries; some in jovial conversation, and quaffing the full bowls; some in music and dancing; some in gallantry and courting; some in all kinds of riotous excess, and wanton dissoluteness; so each in his way doth incessantly prog for joy: but all much in vain, or without any considerable success; finding at most instead of it some faint shadows, or transitory flashes of

pleasure; the which depending on causes very contingent and mutable, residing in a frail temper of fluid humours of body, consisting in slight touches upon the organs of sense, in frisks of the corporeal spirits, or in fumes and vapours twitching the imagination, do soon flag and expire; their short enjoyment being also tempered with regret, being easily dashed by any cross accident, soon declining into a nauseous satiety, and in the end degenerating into gall and bitter remorse; for *even* (as *Solomon* observed) *in laughter, the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness;* and *though* (as it is said in Job) *wickedness is sweet in the mouth; yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of asps within him:* so that indeed the usual delights which men affect, are such, that we should not, if we could, and we could not, if we would, constantly entertain them; such *rejoicing evermore*, being equally unreasonable and impossible.

Wherefore there is ground more than enough, that we should be put to seek for a true, substantial and consistent joy; it being withal implied, that we should affect it in another way, or look for it in another box, than commonly men do; who therefore are so generally disappointed, because they would have it upon impossible or undue terms; and least expect it there, where it is only to be had.

It is a scandalous misprision, vulgarly admitted, concerning religion, that it is altogether sullen and sour, requiring a dull, lumpish, morose kind of life, barring all delight, all mirth, all goodhumour: whereas on the contrary, it alone is the never failing source of true, pure, steady joy; such as is deeply rooted in the heart, immovably founded in the reason of things; permanent like the immortal spirit wherein it dwelleth, and like the eternal objects, whereon it is fixed; which is not apt to fade, or cloy; and is not subject to any impressions apt to corrupt, or impair it: whereas in our text, and in many texts parallel to it, we see, that our religion doth not only allow us, but even doth oblige us to be joyful as much and often as can be, not permitting us to be sad for one minute, banishing the least fit of melancholy, charging us in all times, upon all occasions to be cheerful; supposing consequently that it is in some manner possible to be so, and affording power to effect what it doth require.

Such indeed is the transcendent goodness of our God, that he maketh our delight to be our duty, and our sorrow to be our sin,

adapting his holy will to our principal instinct; that he would have us to resemble himself as in all other perfections, so in a constant state of happiness; that as he hath provided a glorious heaven of bliss for us hereafter, so he would have us enjoy a comfortable paradise of delight here. He accordingly hath ordered the whole frame of our religion in a tendency to produce joy in those who embrace it; for what is the gospel, but (as the holy angel, the first promulger of it, did report) *good tidings of great joy to all people?* How doth God represent himself therein, but as *the God of love, of hope, of peace, of all consolation*, cheerfully smiling in favour on us, graciously inviting us to the most pleasant enjoyments, bountifully dispensing most comfortable blessings of mercy, of grace, of salvation to us? For what doth our Lord call us to him, but *that he may give us rest, and refreshment to our souls;* that he may *wipe away all tears from our eyes;* that he may save us from most woful despair, and settle us *in a blessed hope;* that we may *enter into our master's joy;* that *our joy may be full*, and such *as no man can take from us?*

What is the great overture of the gospel, but the gift of a most blessed *comforter, to abide with us for ever*, cheering our hearts with his lightsome presence, and ravishing consolations? Wherein doth the kingdom of heaven consist? *not in meat and drink, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holyghost?* What are the prime fruits sprouting from that root of christian life, the divine Spirit? They are, as St. *Paul* telleth us, *love, joy, and peace:* are there not numberless declarations, importing a joyful satisfaction granted to the observers of God's commandments; that *light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart?* Doth not our Lord pronounce a special beatitude to the practiser of every virtue? And if we scan all the doctrines, all the institutions, all the precepts, all the promises of christianity, will not each appear pregnant with matter of joy? will not each yield great reason, and strong obligation to this duty of *rejoicing evermore?*

Wherefore a christian, as such, (according to the design of his religion, and in proportion to his compliance with its dictates) is the most jocund, blithe, and gay person in the world; always in humour, and full of cheer; continually bearing a mind well satisfied, a light heart and calm spirit, a smooth brow and serene countenance, a grateful accent of speech, and a sweetly composed

tenor of carriage. No black thought, no irksome desire, no troublesome passion should lodge in his breast; any furrow, any frown, any cloud doth sit ill upon his face: the least fretful word, or froward behaviour doth utterly misbecome him. If at any time it appear otherwise, it is a deflection from his character; it is a blemish and wrong to his profession; it argueth a prevarication in his judgment, or in his practice: he forgetteth that he is a christian, or hath not preserved the innocence belonging to that name. For, if a christian remembreth what he is, or is sensible of his condition; if he reflecteth on the dignity of his person, the nobleness of his relations, the sublimity of his privileges, the greatness and certainty of his hopes; how can he be out of humour? Is it not absurd for him, who is at peace with heaven, with his own conscience, with all the world; for the possessor of the best goods, and the heir of a blessed immortality; for the friend, the favourite, the son of God, to fret or wail? BARROW.

EXCELLENCY OF FAITH.

THE *second office* wherein consists the excellency of *faith*, is to *justify a man:* for there is no man righteous in the sight of God, any further than he is taken into the *unity* of Christ, and into the fellowship of his *merits*. God is alone well pleased in Christ; and till a man be a member of his *body*, a part of his *fulness*, he cannot appear in God's presence. This was the reason why Christ would have none of his bones broken or taken off from the *communion* of his *natural body*, John 19. 36. To note the indissoluble *union* which was to be between him and his *mystical members*. So that now as in a *natural body*, the member is certainly fast to the whole, so long as the bones are firm and sound: so in the *mystical*, where the *body* is, there must every *member* be too, because the bones must not be broken asunder. If then Christ go to heaven, if he stand unblamable before God's justice, we all shall appear in him so too; because his bones cannot be broken. That which thus puts us into the *unity of Christ*, must needs justify our persons, and set us right in the presence of God; and this is our *faith*. The apostle gives two excellent reasons why our *justification* should be of *faith*, rather than of any other *grace:* the first on God's part, that *it might be of grace;* the second on the part of the *promise*, *that the promise might be sure to all the seed*, Rom. 4. 16.

First, *justification that is by faith* is of *mere grace* and *favour*, no way of *work* or *merit:* for the act whereby *faith* justifies, is an act of *humility*, and *selfdereliction*, a *holy despair* of any thing in ourselves, and a going to Christ, a receiving, a looking towards him and his *all-sufficiency;* so that as Mary said of herself, so we may say of *faith*, *the Lord hath respect unto the lowliness of his grace*, which is so far from looking inward for matter of *justification*, that itself as it is a work of the heart, τὸ *credere*, doth not justify, but only as it is *an apprehension or taking hold of Christ*. For as the hand in the very receiving of a thing, must needs first make itself empty; (if it be full before, it must let all that go, ere it can take hold on any other thing;) so *faith* being a receiving of Christ, John 1. 12. must needs suppose an emptiness in the soul before.

Faith hath two properties (as a hand) *to work*, and *to receive:* when *faith* purifies the heart, supports the drooping spirits, worketh by love, carries a man through afflictions, and the like; these are the works of *faith:* when *faith* accepts of *righteousness in Christ*, and receives him as the *gift* of his *Father's love*, when it *embraceth the promises afar off*, Heb. 11. 13. and *lays hold on eternal life*, 1 Tim. 6. 12. this is *the receiving act of faith*. Now *faith* justifies not by working (lest the effect should not be wholly of *grace*, but partly of *grace*, and partly of *work*, Ephes. 2. 8, 9.) but by bare receiving and accepting, or yielding consent to that *righteousness*, which in regard of working, was the *righteousness* of Christ, Rom. 5. 18. and in regard of disposing, imputing, appropriating unto us, was the *righteousness* of God. Rom. 3. 21. 1 Cor. 1. 30. Phil. 3. 9. To make the point of *justification*, by the receiving, and not the working of *faith* plain; let us consider it by a familiar similitude.

Suppose a chirurgion should perfectly cure the hand of a poor man from some desperate wound, which utterly disabled him for any work: when he hath so done, should at one time freely bestow some good alms upon the man, to the receiving whereof he was enabled by the former cure; and at another time should set the man about some work, unto the which likewise the former cure had enabled him; and the work being done, should give him a reward proportionable to his labour. I demand which of these two gifts, are arguments of greater grace in the man, either the recompensing of that labour which was wrought by the strength he restored, or the free bestowing of an equal gift, unto the receiving whereof likewise he himself gave ability? Any man will easily an-

swer, that the gift was a work of more free grace than the reward, though unto both, way was made by his own merciful cure; for all the mercy which was showed in the cure, was not able to nullify the intrinsical proportion which afterwards did arise between the work and the reward. Now this is the plain difference between our doctrine and the doctrine of our adversaries, in the point of *justification:* they say we are justified by *grace*, and yet by *works*, because *grace* enables us to *work:* we say we are justified freely, not by the *works of grace*, but by the *grace* which bestows our *justification*, and therewith our strength of working unto us. For surely God's *free grace* is more magnified in giving us undeservedly both *righteousness* and *works*, than in giving us *works* to deserve our *righteousness*.

Secondly, *justification by faith* doth make the *promise sure to all the seed:* if unto a beggar should be proposed some excellent benefit, upon condition to perform some acceptable and perfect service unto the person that offers it; whom yet it would be impossible to please by working, without some exact ability for the duty required; the man might easily doubt of the certainty of the benefit, because his performance of the condition required, is uncertain: but if the same benefit should be proposed upon no other act on his part required, than only the acknowledgment of his own want, and the willing acceptance of the thing offered, a man could not be unsure of it: so if the Lord should propose *righteousness* or *salvation* to a man upon condition of his *moral obedience*, man's corruptions are so many, and his abilities so weak, his enemies so potent, and his heart so treacherous to comply with them, that the *promise* cannot be made sure to him upon the concurrence of his own works. But when there is nothing required of a man, but to cleave to Christ, nothing but to relinquish his own endeavours, and to accept the help of a sure Saviour, and to rely upon the sure mercies of David; this must needs make our *righteousness* and *salvation* to be as certain, as is the value of the *merits*, or fidelity of the *promise*, on which we rely. If there be nothing requisite to the firmness and consistency of a house, but only to be put upon the foundation, then the house must needs be as sure as the foundation; if there be nothing requisite to the safeness of a man's money or writings, but to put them in a closet or box, the things must needs be as safe as the place into which they are put: so since nothing else is required to make our *salvation* sure, but only

to rest upon Christ, who is a safe foundation to his church, Matt. 16. 18. and a certain treasure, Col. 3. 3. *faith* which alone puts us into him, doth there withal make our *salvation* sure unto us. *Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect and precious;* (there is both our foundation and our treasure:) now the safety which faith brings from hence is this, *he that believeth, shall not be confounded*, or *put to shame:* in the prophet it is, *shall not make haste*, 1 Pet. 2. 6. both words express safety. For a man to rely upon another for any good thing, and at last to fail in his expectation; this must needs shame him in the disappointment of his hopes: but when the *hopes* of a man are grounded upon the unsearchable *riches*, and the unfailable *promise*, and the immutable *truth, power*, and goodness of God; impossible it is that the faith of such a man should shame or deceive him. When a man is secure and certain of any good thing, he is contented to wait the season of it: David by God's promise and unction, was certain of the kingdom, and therefore he would not take away the life of Saul when it was in his power, but waited till the time of his death, by God appointed, should come, 1 Sam. 26. 9, 10, 11. But when a man is unconfident of a thing, he is ready to snatch at every probability, to make use of every occasion that happens to further his desires. If I should see two men going towards the court in competition for some office or preferment, and should observe the one to ride night and day in full speed, to deny himself the comforts of the way, and to express much impatiency and indignation at every stoppage that met him; the other to take time and leisure, to rely upon the former promises of the prince, or the prevalency of some honourable friends, and to laugh at the greediness of his competitor, I should easily conclude, that the hopes of that man were greater, whose haste is less: for when a man hath a thing already in promise, and that from the hands of a man of whose power and fidelity he hath infallible assurance, he is not over vehement for performance, but willingly attends the times and good pleasure of his friend. Now this is the business of *faith* to give a being to the things we hope for; and though in themselves they be afar off, and out of sight, yet to make them subsistent and at hand in the promise, even within the reach and embracement of faith, Heb. 11. 1, 13. So that faith doth therefore keep a man from greediness and precipitancy in his pursuit, and from confusion and shame in his hopes of good, because it sees them as safe and certain in the *power* and

promises of Christ, as if they were already made good unto him. So then to conclude this point, faith being the only grace wherein is magnified the *fulness* and *freeness* of God's *favour*, and wherein is secured his *promise* to all the *seed;* it must needs be the fittest *grace* for a *merciful justification*. BISHOP REYNOLDS.

ANECDOTES.

CONSCIENCE.

CONSTANS II. emperor of the east, to secure to himself the crown, first obliged his elder brother Theodosius to take orders in the church, which disqualified him for civil government, and afterwards cruelly put him to death. The execrations of his subjects and the agonies of remorse forbade his residing in a capital which had been the witness of his guilty fratricide. He became a voluntary exile; but from his conscience he could not retire. He thought he saw a phantom before him wherever he went. It was the image of his murdered brother, presenting to his lips a cup of blood, and saying, or seeming to say, *drink*, brother, drink!

It is naught, it is naught saith the buyer; but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth. Prov. 20. 14.

AUGUSTINE relates that a mountebank had promised the citizens of Carthage to discover to them their most secret thoughts, in case they would come on a day appointed to hear him. Being all met, he said, "vile vultis emere, et care vendere." *You wish to buy cheap and sell dear*. Every man's conscience pleaded guilty to the charge; and the mountebank was dismissed with mirth and applause. Are there not too many christians who traffic upon the same principles!

HERODOTUS mentions that he saw in Asia Minor, from one sea to the other, monuments of the victories of Sesostris. In several countries was read the following inscription engraven on pillars; "Sesostris, king of kings and lord of lords, subdued this country by the power of his arms." The eye of faith looks with confidence to the erection of far other memorials. It fixes on the period when the missionaries of the cross shall in every land have occasion to inscribe, "Jehovah Jesus KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS, hath conquered the whole earth by the power of his grace."

THE overthrow of the forces of Senacherib is acknowledged by Herodotus; but it is curious to observe in how absurd and fabulous a manner he accounts for it. He says, "a prodigious number of rats entered the enemy's camp, and by gnawing to pieces all their bowstrings and the thongs of their shields, rendered them incapable of making the smallest defence." "Sethon" (the Egyptian prince who had been invited by Hezekiah to assist his armies) "on his return home ordered a statue of himself to be set up in the temple of Vulcan, holding in his right hand a rat and the words issuing from his mouth, *let the man who beholds me, reverence divine power!*" God, who for the destruction of the Assyrians, employed an angel, or as some think the lethiferous wind, called the samiel, can effect the greatest devastation by the weakest means. He can hiss for his fly; he can send abroad his caterpillar, or his cankerworm.

Of the latter insect, not long ago, such prodigious swarms wasted the country in Galway, in Ireland, that in summer, trees and fields appeared equally bare as in winter. Let the man who beholds the meanest creature of God learn to revere the divine power. Egypt has felt, and God only knows what individuals and nations may yet feel, how successfully God can employ the neglected, the despised insect or reptile, for the accomplishment of his righteous designs of judgment and mercy.

IMMEDIATELY after the battle at Marathon, in which Miltiades with a small force routed the prodigious army of Darius, an Athenian soldier still reeking with the blood of his enemy, quitting the ranks, ran to Athens to carry his fellow citizens the joyful intelligence of a complete victory. Arrived at the magistrate's house, he could only cry out, "*rejoice, rejoice, the victory is ours*," and fell down dead at his feet. This exultation, O believer, thou art encouraged to anticipate; when thou art falling in death, thou shalt have occasion to sing, "rejoice, rejoice the victory is mine; through the blood of the Lamb it is mine!"

A HAPPY example of the wisdom of a poor man delivering a city may be drawn from a passage in the history of Alexander.

To punish the rebellion of the inhabitants of Lampascus, he determined to destroy their city. Anaximenes, the philosopher and historian who had been at one period a tutor of Alexander,

came to sue for the place of his nativity. The monarch suspecting his design, swore by the gods *he would never grant his request*. Introduced into his presence, Anaximanes says, "I am come, O Alexander, to request the favour, that you will totally destroy Lampsacus." The king was surprised, and by the ingenious evasion the city was saved.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

FIRST REPORT OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA.

In conformity with the third article of the constitution of the Bible Society, the managers lay before the society the report of their proceedings, together with an account of their receipts and disbursements of money, from its institution on the 12th of December last, until the present time.

Immediately, upon receiving notice of their election, the managers met, and organized themselves agreeably to the provisions of the constitution; and without delay entered upon the performance of the duties assigned them.

The first object of the managers was to draw the attention of the public, not only in this state, but through the United States, to the great importance of such institutions; and to stimulate the friends of the Bible, in the other large cities on this continent, to exert themselves to establish societies similar to the one organized in this city. With this view, an address to the public was prepared and circulated. Three thousand copies of this address were printed; two thousand in the English, and one thousand in the German language: and it has been sent into every part of the United States, addressed to distinguished characters of the different religious denominations. What its ultimate effect will be, in the several places to which it has been forwarded, cannot yet be ascertained: but it is known, that it has excited the serious attention of many of the friends of christianity; and that, in some places, it is in contemplation to make the attempt to establish Bible Societies.

In connexion with this measure, the managers considered it to be of the utmost importance to the prosperity of the institution, that strenuous efforts should immediately be made for increasing the funds of the society and enlarging the number of its members. To accomplish these objects, they not only thought it proper to

invite the pious and benevolent, through the medium of the public prints, to come forward and subscribe; but they were of opinion, that the magnitude of the object was such, as to justify them in making personal application to the citizens of Philadelphia, for their aid and support in carrying it into effect. Accordingly, having distributed themselves into small committees, and divided the city into districts, they determined that a general solicitation for subscriptions and donations should be made. This measure, to a considerable extent, and with no small success, has been carried into effect: but the times having been unfavourable for such an application, and the season inclement, much still remains to be done in the same way.

The board of managers were of opinion, that the sooner the charity, placed at their disposal, was directed to its destined object, the better would the purposes of the society be answered. It was therefore resolved that the funds in possession should immediately be put into active operation; except, that it was adopted as a principle, that the money arising from life subscriptions and donations should form a permanent fund, the interest of which only should be employed; which arrangement, it was supposed, would better meet the views of the contributors, and better promote the objects of the society, than if the whole should be expended at once.

A purchase was therefore made of 300 English Bibles, 300 English New Testaments, and 300 German New Testaments; and some general principles to regulate the distribution of the books, and guard against impositions, were agreed upon. This stock, however, was soon exhausted; the demand proving, upon experiment, to be much greater than was expected. The managers therefore ordered another purchase to be made, of 1000 English Bibles, and 200 German New Testaments, and of the books purchased a small proportion only remain at this time in the hands of the librarian.

As it was not practicable to obtain a cheap edition of the German Bible in this country, the managers directed that 300 copies, and as many of the New Testament, should be imported from Germany, as soon as intercourse with Europe should be again opened. They also directed, that 100 French, 100 Welch, and 50 Gaëlic Bibles, together with 50 English New Testaments of a large type, should be imported from London as soon as practicable. All the above mentioned books have been sent for, and may now be expected in a short time.

The distribution of Bibles, which has taken place, has been chiefly confined to this city and its vicinity, but good opportunities of supplying the destitute at a distance have not been neglected.

At the request of a missionary of the united brethren, 75 Bibles and 25 New Testaments have been sent to the Muskingum, to be distributed among the Indians of two christian congregations, and among the poor white inhabitants. One hundred Bibles have been committed to Mr. Thomas Haskins, a member of the society, to be distributed "by means of confidential friends," in the destitute parts of Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. One hundred Bibles have likewise been committed to captain Benjamin Wickes, to be carried to Canton, and distributed among the sailors, and others who can read English, in that port, by himself, and the rev. Mr. Morrison, a missionary, resident in that place. Mr. Markoe, one of the managers, has received 50 Bibles, and as many New Testaments, to be distributed by himself in the West Indies, among the people of colour, or others, at his discretion. Twenty-five New Testaments have also been sent to the rev. John H. Rice, to be distributed among the slaves who can read, in Virginia.

The public and charitable institutions in this city have received a special regard from the managers in the distribution of Bibles.

The managers, conceiving that it would be of importance to obtain a charter, called a meeting of the society, to consider and determine upon the propriety of petitioning the legislature of this state, then in session, for an act of incorporation. At this meeting, a memorial, together with the draft of a bill, were submitted to the society, which, being considered and approved, were forwarded to the legislature: but the expected success did not attend the application. The failure, it is believed, was chiefly owing to the application having been made at so late a period of the session of the legislature, that there was not time to pay suitable attention to the subject. It will now belong to the society to dispose of this business in that way, which to them may seem best.

As this society owed its existence, in a great measure, to the noble example afforded by the British and Foreign Bible Society, established at London; and as intimation had been given by a respectable member of that society, that a handsome donation would be granted to the first society of a similar kind established in the

United States; it was one of the first acts of this society, after its organization, to request their treasurer to give information, through his correspondent in London, of the formation of a Bible Society in this city; and to transmit a copy of its constitution, and solicit the patronage and support of the Bible Society in London. This was done. And it will afford pleasure to the members of the society to be informed, that the treasurer's communication produced a very agreeable impression on the minds of the whole committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Without hesitation or delay, they opened their arms to embrace our infant institution, with truly fraternal affection. Instead of one hundred pounds, which this society had been encouraged to hope for, by a unanimous vote of the committee, *two hundred pounds sterling* were given in aid of our funds: and so strong was the tide of their generous affection toward this society, that a much larger sum would have been voted for its use, had they not supposed that our institution was limited in its operation to the state of Pennsylvania.

They express an anxious wish that our plan should be enlarged, so as to comprehend the whole union, in one society. But the managers are of opinion, that when the address of the society shall reach them, together with the explanations which have been directed to be made, they will be convinced that the plan which has been adopted is the most eligible for this country. However, the managers believe, that if no similar societies should be formed in any part of this country, then it will be the duty of the society, to extend its arms from Maine to Georgia, and from the Atlantic to the Mississippi.

The managers having now had some opportunity of testing the importance and utility of the plan of the Bible Society, by actual experiment, beg leave to make a few observations on the subject in the conclusion of this report.

The necessity for such an institution has appeared much more evidently to the managers, since, in the course of their duty, they have been led to make particular inquiries into the condition of the poorer class of people in this city, than it ever did before. The deficiency of Bibles has been found to be much greater than was expected; and it is believed to be as great in many other places. The number of families and individuals, who are destitute of a copy of the scriptures is so great, that the whole of the funds in the possession of the society, could be profitably expended in sup-

plying the wants of this city alone: and the opportunities of distributing them in other places are so numerous, that if their funds were tenfold as great as they are, they would still be inadequate to satisfy the demand.

That the institution will be useful, and has already been useful, can be doubted by no one, who values the word of God. Some hundreds of families are now in possession of a Bible, by means of the society, which never had one before. And it deserves to be mentioned, that the books have commonly been received, with emotion, and strong indications of gratitude; and that the application for them is often earnest and pressing. This alone, it is presumed, will be considered by every contributor as a rich remuneration, for all the expense and labour, to which he may have subjected himself in support of the institution.

But beside the good resulting from the promotion of the chief and direct object of the society, the managers are of opinion that very important and desirable effects will be indirectly produced by this association.

The cordiality and harmony with which christians of so many denominations have united, in prosecuting this important object, cannot fail of being attended with some good effect on all concerned. It is an approximation to that unity and brotherly love among christians which all good men so ardently desire. At least, it will have a tendency to remove prejudices by promoting mutual acquaintance between the members of different religious com munities.

The managers do, moreover, believe, that the zeal discovered, and efforts made, by so many persons in this city, of different conditions and professions, to furnish the poor with Bibles gratuitously, will have a happy tendency to induce many to appreciate the sacred scriptures more highly than they have been wont to do; and may dispose those who possess Bibles, but have suffered them to lie neglected in their houses, to peruse them with serious attention.

On the whole, the managers feel it to be a duty, to express their gratitude to the Author of every good gift, for the institution of Bible Societies; and particularly, for the degree of favour which he hath been pleased to manifest to this infant institution. At the same time, they congratulate the society on the pleasing prospects of success which are open before them. This continent presents an extensive field for the labours of such societies; which, under dif-

gent cultivation and the blessing of heaven, may be expected to yield a copious harvest.

In the present convulsed state of the European continent, perhaps there is no spot upon earth, from which the light of divine truth might be sent forth more successfully, to various and distant parts of the benighted world, than from this city. The institution of a bible society in this place, therefore, must be considered an auspicious event. And the managers do not think that their hopes are too sanguine, when they persuade themselves, that at no very distant period, this society will be found in the foremost rank among those institutions, which piety or humanity has erected for the relief of the indigent, on this continent. And they conclude this report, by declaring it to be, not only the object of their prayers, but their hopes, that before the present generation shall have passed away, the holy scriptures will be read by all the principal nations under heaven: and thus the way be opened for the fulfilment of the prediction of the prophet, "*The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.*"

THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER.

A day of thanksgiving and prayer, appointed by the general assembly of the presbyterian church to be observed by the churches under their care.

THE committee to whom the subject was referred, made, on the appointment of a day of thanksgiving, the following report, which was adopted.

Whereas it has pleased Almighty God, in his wise providence, to avert, in a great measure, the temporal judgments which threatened us during the last year, and whereas the interests of religion are advancing, so as to fill the hearts of believers with gladness, and to encourage them in hopes of more copious outpourings of God's Spirit:

Therefore resolved, that it be, and it hereby is, recommended to the several congregations under the care of the general assembly, that they do respectively set apart the fourth Thursday in August next, as a day of solemn thanksgiving and prayer; and that, on said day, the members of our different congregations throughout the United States, do abstain from unnecessary worldly labour and recreations, and meet in their several places of public worship, for the purpose of rendering their united praise and

thanksgiving to Almighty God, for the distinguished and unmerited blessings with which he has visited our country, and the churches in our land, during the year past:

And that it be farther recommended to the congregations so assembled, humbly to implore the great Head of the church, that he would establish the peace and prosperity of our country, visit his churches with still more copious effusions of the blessed Spirit, throughout this and every other land; that sinners may be turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that professors of religion may walk worthy of the vocation, wherewith they are called; that the heathen may be given to Christ for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession; and that the ends thereof may speedily see the salvation of God. Certified by

JACOB J. JANEWAY, Stated Clerk.

May, 1809.

STATE OF RELIGION.

A narrative of the state of religion, within the bounds of the general assembly of the presbyterian church, and in the states of Connecticut and Vermont, during the time intervening between May 1808 *and May* 1809.

The general assembly once more approach the churches under their care, that they may lay before them a condensed narrative of the state of religion within their bounds.

The dealings of God with us, brethren, during the past year, call for renewed emotions of wonder, love, and praise. He has not left himself without a witness amongst us; the east, the west, the north, and the south can testify; for in them all, his stately footsteps may be seen. In answer to the prayers of his people, he has come down like dew upon the mown grass, and like showers that water the earth; and we are happy to state that his glory is yet passing before us, and that his power and grace are still displayed, in the conviction and conversion of sinners, as well as in building up his people in their most holy faith. These are the great outlines of our situation, to the more particular description of which we now call your attention.

It is with peculiar pleasure, then, that we state, that peace and harmony, so ornamental and necessary to the christian church, have prevailed in the past year, with but few exceptions, through-

out our bounds; that the worship of God has been generally and respectfully attended in our churches; that the distinguishing doctrines of grace have been well received, and, in many instances, have been attended with great and visible success. Although from the great extent of late revivals and the numbers received into our church, there was reason to fear that many tares were interspersed with the harvest, yet we are happy to state that instances of apostasy have seldom occurred.

The leading features that have characterized our churches during the last year, have, we apprehend, been a growing thirst for divine knowledge, and an increased attachment to the distinguishing doctrines of grace. Family visitation and the catechetical instruction of our beloved youth, have doubtless contributed in a great degree to excite, as well as to satisfy, this desire. We are happy to state that catechetical instruction has been attended to during the last year, with perhaps greater assiduity, than has ever been witnessed amongst us; and we are persuaded that its results will be highly favourable to the dearest interests of the church of God in our country. Deeply impressed with a conviction that holiness becometh his house for ever, the churches of Christ have turned their attention, with increasing care, to the support of a wise and salutary discipline. Societies for diffusing evangelical truth have been organized, and are now in operation; bibles and small religious tracts have been extensively distributed. Praying societies, formerly established, have been maintained, whilst many new ones have been added. These institutions, by calling into exercise the latent gifts and graces of the people of God, in an essential part of his worship, as well as in promoting zeal and brotherly love, have served as nurseries of the church, and have produced, and are producing, almost incredible effects upon the moral and religious state of the community.

The presbytery of Long Island has experienced a very general revival from the presence of the Lord. The presbyteries of Albany and Hudson, in some of their congregations, have been visited with divine influence from on high; whilst a large district of East Jersey, as well as its extreme in the west, has known, or is learning to know, the almighty power of God. Acknowledged infidels, and practical unbelivers, who so lately eyed the cross with malignity, and its adherents with contempt, are now seen, in considerable numbers, clothed, and in their right minds, at the feet of Jesus;

whilst the poor, dissipated prodigal, who so lately was a burthen to himself and to the world, is seen returning to his father's house, or already encircled in his father's arms. Those parts of the church, which were favoured with revivals in former years, appear to be securing the advantages they have gained, and to be gathering in the gleanings of the vintage; whilst bodily agitations, where they had appeared, have almost wholly subsided, and have given place to calm inquiry into the great and leading doctrines of the gospel.

The assembly have observed with pleasure that the various missions under their direction have been prosecuted with exemplary diligence and fidelity, and with a measure of success calculated to rejoice the hearts of those who have contributed of their worldly substance to the support of this great object, and to engage them to a continuance of their liberality. Through the instrumentality of these missions, not only a large population of our own citizens, who would otherwise remain almost wholly destitute of the gospel, have its doctrines and ordinances dispensed among them; but several Indian tribes have the invaluable blessings of civilization and the christian religion brought within their reach; and the unhappy children of Africa are also greeted with those glad tidings of salvation to which, in a christian country, they have a peculiar claim.

But whilst events of a prosperous nature are recounted with pleasure, it is the duty of this assembly to inform the churches, that circumstances have occurred of an opposite description, and such as ought to be considered as highly calamitous and distressing. They have learned with regret, that, whilst several parts of our country have recently been supplied with a gospel ministry and the regular administration of ordinances, others in these respects are in an exceedingly destitute situation. "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few; pray ye, brethren, the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into his harvest." In a portion of country of some extent, embraced within the bounds of the synod of Kentucky, we are sorry to learn that a spirit of fanaticism, propagating the most palpable errors as well as insubordination to the constituted authorities of our church, has greatly prevailed. In consequence of this, some of our congregations have been torn by intestine divisions, and are yet bleeding at every pore. The assembly conceive that they cannot do justice to their own feelings on this occasion, or to the cause of Christ, without noticing in terms of high disapprobation so ruinous a de-

parture from duty; they hold out at the same time the hand of conciliation to their erring brethren, and invite a speedy return to the good order and discipline of our church.

In addition to the above, the assembly have heard with pain of the prevalence, in some parts of their bounds, of a form of religion without its power, as well as of vice and immorality. Lukewarmness, detested by the Head of the church; intemperance, ingulfing every social and domestic virtue; an awful profanation of the sabbath; sports and unlawful games; like so many ensigns of death, have appeared, assailing the kingdom of Christ, and strengthening the empire of his foes. Whilst we are undoubtedly called to mourn over these evils, we are equally called to counteract them; "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, and shall finally prevail." "For Zion's sake, therefore, will we not hold our peace, and for Jerusalem's sake we will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

From the accounts received from our sister churches of Connecticut and Vermont, it appears that the great Head of the church has manifested toward them, during the last year, the most signal interpositions of divine love and mercy. Yale College has been visited, and a number of her sons have been hopefully gathered into the bosom of the church. Many towns and villages, in both of these states, have felt, in a very uncommon degree, the power of sovereign grace; and accessions to their communion have been exceedingly numerous. Infidelity is confounded, or retires from the public eye. Characters distinguished by talents, learning, morals, and property, have been led publicly to profess themselves the disciples of our Lord. A knowledge of the holy scriptures is diffusing itself far and wide. We are also informed, that distinguished revivals of religion have existed in several parts of Massachusetts, and that hopeful appearances have also begun in New Hampshire and in the district of Maine.

On a review of the whole information we have received, the assembly take their stand at the foot of the cross, and rejoice in the wonders of redeeming love.

If the state of religion in the churches under their care had even been generally dark and unpromising, though they might mourn over the ingratitude of man, they could not cease to confide in the faithfulness of God. But, in justly deserved wrath,

our God has remembered mercy; once more he has given us abundant cause to glory in his name, and to rejoice with trembling.

We have only to add our ardent prayer, that *the angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to every kindred and tongue*, may soon reach the utmost bounds of his destination; that every obstacle that might impede his flight, or stay his progress, may be speedily removed, and that the knowledge of Christ may soon cover the earth, as the waters fill the sea. "Come quickly; Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus."

Certified by

JACOB J. JANEWAY, Stated Clerk.

Extract of a letter from a Missionary in the East Indies, to his friend in this city.

Serampore, December 27, 1808.

DEAR BROTHER EASTBURN,

We are going on with our work notwithstanding all the opposition we have met with, and though the conversions of the natives have been much less frequent since the restrictions upon us, yet we have seven or eight stations where the gospel is preached, and the holy scriptures distributing. Our increase at Serampore this year does not fall much short of other years, though the persons who have joined us are mostly from among nominal christians born in this country. The translations have had no interruption. We are finishing the last volume of the whole bible in the Bengalee. The New Testament in the Shanscrit is printed; and by the end of March the New Testament in the Orissa language will be finished (God willing.) The other translations are not quite so forward.

On Lord's day next the new chapel at Calcutta will be opened. Brother Carey and Mr. Forsyth are to be present. I hope this new place of worship, in this large city, may be of great use in forming and building up a church that may be not only serviceable to Europeans, but to the heathen; converted youths, born in the country, may be very useful in preaching to the heathen. Several young persons have been added to us in this city, who appear to be ripening for some kind of work, and (though despised by the white skins) are likely to be much more useful than many who value themselves very much on their English blood and English skins.

It is now so long since we heard from your favoured land, that news from America, especially religious news, is very much desired. I hope it may be glad tidings respecting the progress of the Saviour's kingdom.

Pray for us, dear brother, and let me hear from you as soon as possible. Your account of the American Indians was very pleasant. Oh! what can almighty, sovereign, and all-conquering grace do in the hearts of the most wretched of the sons of man. Oh! how amazing! how to be admired! Hard hearts softened; proud hearts humbled; impure hearts shocked at their own impurity, and praying against besetting sins; careless hearts fixed on eternal realities; and the root out of a dry ground becoming the chief among ten thousand and the altogether lovely. Oh! may this transforming grace reign in your heart and mine, is the prayer of, my dear brother, yours very affectionately.

WILLIAM WARD.

Letter from Rev. Mr. Ward, Missionary at Serampore, to a correspondent in this city.

Serampore, December 29, 1808.

MY DEAR BROTHER STAUGHTON,

YOUR very welcome letter of the 18th April, 1807, would not have been still unanswered if the intercourse betwixt India and Philadelphia had not been interrupted by the barking of the dogs of war. Oh! when, when shall that precious gospel, which we preach, complete the regeneration of the world! Hasten thy coming, Oh! blessed Redeemer! "*All creation travails, groans, and bids thee come.*"

I was very happy to hear that the gospel was so flourishing with you, and I pray God, my dear brother, that you may see (the grandest sight on earth) many called effectually by divine grace through you as an instrument. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus at his coming?" Ah! what but this, in that moment *at his coming*, can be our joy? And what a joy? The pleasure which our Lord felt in presenting alive the young man who had been dead, the only son of his mother, to her arms, may give us some idea of what a faithful minister of Christ will feel in that hour, that interesting hour, when he shall present redeemed souls, saved by divine grace from *eternal death*, to that Saviour who

bought them with his own blood. You, my dear brother, and my dear brethren here, each with his group of Americans or Indians, will share largely in this ecstatic joy. As for myself, if I escape the frowns of the Lamb, and there were any other way of getting to heaven than by hearing "well done, good and faithful servant," I must go that way, or turn to the left, and hear the sound "depart."

I thank you for the letter of brother Lahalt, and for all the other news your very interesting communication conveys. Write again, my dear brother, as soon as possible; the sooner and the longer the better.

The work amongst us is not without signs and proofs of the hand of God, but we have lately had no stir among the natives. Brother Mardon has baptized two or three at Goomalty, but the heathen do not yet bow beneath the stroke of the Redeemer's sword, and our preaching is not accompanied with any remarkable effects. A number of persons, who were nominal before, have been wrought upon and baptized this year, but nothing but *heathens* converted can satisfy a missionary. A new chapel is about to be opened at Calcutta by us on Lord's day next, and I hope much good will be done in this place. What are called the countryborn seem to be the most favoured among the seals to our ministry at present.

The Shanscrit New Testament is out. This is one of the greatest works that has issued from the mission press, or is likely ever to come from it. It is so, not only because it required more learning than any other, but because it is a language known so extensively all over India. As the power of the Romans over so great a portion of the globe was a great means of spreading truth, so the reverence paid to the Shanscrit, and its being the root of so many other dialects, may tend much to the furtherance of the gospel.

Mrs. Felix Carey is just dead. He is at Rangoon with brother Chater. Brother Chamberlain is still active at Cutiva; brother Mardon at Goomalty, near Malda; brother Moore at Miniary, the same neighbourhood; brother Fernandez at Dinagepore; brother W. Carey, jun. at Sadamahal; a member who lately belonged to the Armenian church is gone to settle in Jessore; and brother Robinson is going to try to settle in the confines of Bootan. Brothers Carey, Marsdan, Rowe, and Ward, are at Serampore and Calcutta; so that we are all at the plow waiting for the rains from heaven. "Pray thou the Lord of the harvest."

Love to sister Biss, if near you, in which Mrs. Ward joins. Shall be very happy to hear from her. Love to Mrs. Staughton, and all who pray with their hearts turned to Serampore.

Ever thine, my dear brother,

W. WARD.

POETRY.

For the Evangelical Intelligencer.

RESIGNATION.

In the garden of Zion that bloom'd on the earth,
Grew a rosebush that spread lovely fragrance around;
The buds that she bore were of heavenly birth
Which she nurtured to shed sweet perfume o'er the ground!

She watch'd, as each opening bloom would expand,
To guide it from thorns that appear'd in its way;
And rear'd by her kindness each blossom was bland,
And promised her tenderness full to repay!

And oft when the night would inveil the parterre,
And shadow the beauties she hop'd she should view;
To the God of the garden she utter'd a prayer
To lead her dear offspring to bloom as they grew!

The dewdrop of 'grace' had just moisten'd a flow'r,
When the rude hand of death swept the blossom away;
The once stately bush stood reclined in her bow'r,
And wept for her offspring that moldering lay!

When o'er the sad spot, lo! a radiance divine,
Descended to bring the afflicted relief;
"Ah! why for the loss of thy Zion repine
And droop overwhelm'd with despondence and grief?"

"Though dead, thy fair bud in the skies shall expand,
And leaving thy grief, thy embraces and love,
Convey'd on the pinions of angels shall stand,
And bloom with the bless'd in the gardens above!"

"Thou know'st that if planted in Zion below,
Affliction thy lonely compeer must remain;
But thy soul in the skies with new rapture shall glow,
Redeem'd by the blood of the Lamb that was slain!" J. H.

For the Evangelical Intelligencer.

ON AN INFANT WHO DIED, AFTER LINGERING NEAR TWO WEEKS, IN CONVULSIONS.

Dear, lovely babe! repose in peace,
Now all thy worldly sorrows cease,
Soon is thy mortal journey run,
Ere scarce arisen, sets thy sun!

With thee life's fleeting scene is o'er,
Nor pain, nor grief, shall vex thee more,
No more the rude convulsion make,
Thy infant frame with anguish shake!

The flutt'ring soul on anxious wing,
Has flown to meet thy heav'nly king,
Where pallid death has no control,
O'er thy immortal, happy soul!

Cease tender parent, cease that sigh,
And check the tear that dews thy eye,
His soul has fled to realms above,
To mansions of eternal love!

O! let thy loss this thought impart,
Hath grace divine prepar'd my heart,
So that when this frail body dies,
My soul shall mingle with the skies?

Sweet babe I press to thy abodes,
Where wan-eyed care no more corrodes,
With thee th' exulting chorus join,
And shout the praise of love divine! J. H.

EPITAPH ON THE STONE OVER A TOMB WHICH INCLOSED THE REMAINS OF THREE LITTLE CHILDREN.

Beneath this stone three infants' ashes lie,
Say, are they lost or sav'd?
If death's by sin; they sinn'd because they're here;
If heav'n's by works; in heav'n they can't appear!
Ah! reason how deprav'd!
Revere the sacred page! The knot's untied
They died; for Adam sinn'd;
They live; for JESUS DIED!

PSALM lxxxiv. 7.

They go from strength to strength, *every one of them* in Zion appeared before God.

" Blest, who, their strength on thee reclin'd,
" Thy seat explore with constant mind,
" And, Salem's distant tow'rs in view,
" With active zeal their way pursue;
" Secure the thirsty vale they tread,
" While, call'd from out their sandy bed,
" (As down in grateful show'rs distill'd
" The heav'ns their kindliest moisture yield)
" The copious springs their steps beguile,
" And bid the cheerless desert smile.
" From stage to stage advancing still,
" Behold them reach far Zion's hill,
" And prostrate at her hallow'd shrine,
" Adore the Majesty divine."